

Police Dispatchers



Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)

There are six PSAPs, also known as 9-1-1 centers in Miami-Dade County. The cities of Miami, Miami Beach, Hialeah, Pinecrest and Coral Gables all have local 9-1-1 centers. All 9-1-1 calls made within these five cities are routed through the Telephone Company to the respective 9-1-1 center. All other 9-1-1 calls made not within these cities are routed to the County center. The Miami-Dade County 9-1-1 Center is under the supervision of the Miami-Dade Police Department Communications Bureau and is the busiest PSAP in the southeastern United States. All 9-1-1 calls received from wire line telephones display the listed telephone number and address of the calling party at the call taker's position. These features are known as "Automatic Number Identification" (ANI) and "Automatic Location Identification (ALI).

In the near future these same features will be provided from wireless telephones through a cooperative effort between the Federal Communication Commission (FCC), Public Safety Organizations and the wireless industry.

Cellular Telephone 9-1-1 Calls

Currently, cellular calls do not transmit the location which can delay the dispatch process. It is important the 9-1-1 cellular telephone caller identify their location so that the closest emergency units may be dispatched.

When cellular telephones are used, the call searches for the nearest cell tower. The closest tower directs the call to an available landline. If the site has reached capacity, the caller may hear a fast busy signal or dead air. Possibly there are circumstances where a caller hears ringing even though the call has not reached the 9-1-1 center.

There may be times when a 9-1-1 call is "dropped" if the caller is not stationary. The movement of the call to the cell tower with the strongest signal may "drop"/disconnect the call if the timing of the handoff from the tower to tower is not synchronized properly.

If the 9-1-1 cellular telephone caller is disconnected due to a non-stationary disconnection, or there is a busy signal, or dead air, the caller should hang up and redial immediately.

Computer Aided Dispatch System

When a call is made to the Miami-Dade County 9-1-1 Center, the Police Complaint Officer (9-1-1 call taker) receiving the call verifies information such as the address and name of the caller to ensure the call is properly dispatched. The Police Complaint Officer determines the nature of the problem and enters this information into our computer system. It is then electronically transmitted to the appropriate radio dispatch position for response by either police, fire or both entities. This is determined by the judgement of the Police Complaint Officer based on the nature of the call. The telephone system at the Miami-Dade 9-1-1 center uses a sophisticated state-of-the-art telecommunications system that routes each call for proper dispatching by police or fire rescue. As the computer executes the switching of the call, it keeps track of the units currently responding to calls and those still available. They instantly display this information on the computer screen at the dispatcher's position.

Call Taking and Dispatch Area

The main floor of the Miami-Dade County 9-1-1 Center is divided into three operational functions:

* 9-1-1 Call Processing

There are four rows of 9-1-1 answering consoles with a total of five answering positions per row. Civilian Police Complaint Officers staff these 9-1-1 answering positions. All Police Complaint Officers are

trained in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) protocols. These include pre-arrival instructions for almost every medical emergency which allows the Police Complaint Officer to instruct the caller in rendering aid to injured parties. While calls of this nature take longer to handle, this enhances recovery and increases the chance for survival of seriously injured persons.

* Police Dispatch

Civilian Police Dispatchers operate 14 radio dispatch consoles to provide the radio interface to police units on calls in the specific geographic area to which they are assigned. In addition to Miami-Dade Police Officers, this Center also dispatches Police Officers for 27 local municipalities. We also have the capability of communicating with various local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies within our County and from neighboring counties through Mutual Aid channels on the radio system.

* Fire Rescue Dispatch

There are 10 consoles operated by civilian Fire Dispatchers who are responsible for dispatching Miami-Dade Fire Rescue units, and other Miami-Dade County government elements, e.g., traffic signs and signals; roads and bridges; and Building and Zoning.

Fire Dispatchers have the ability to patch fire rescue units in the field, directly via radio, to any one of a number of area hospitals. By doing this, rescue personnel can talk directly with emergency room doctors and if necessary, send patient EKG readings by radio to equipment at the hospitals for immediate viewing by their doctors. The Fire Department Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Air-Rescue Helicopters are dispatched by the Fire Communications Center.

Fire Rescue assigns units to an excess of 168,000 incidents (alarms) annually. Of these, approximately 72 percent are of a medical nature ranging from something as simple as a stubbed toe, to much more serious, heart attacks and critical vehicle accidents.

Police Complaint Officers



When to Dial 9-1-1

- ▶ The 9-1-1 Emergency System makes an important difference in our community everyday. It is your first source of help in times of crisis and it can mean the difference between life and death. When used properly, 9-1-1 saves seconds and those seconds can save lives.
- ▶ Dialing 9-1-1 is the fastest, easiest way to communicate with local police, fire, and medical services during an emergency.

Non-Emergency Situations

- ▶ Do not dial 9-1-1 for non-emergency situations. For non-emergency situations such as noisy neighbors or stolen hubcaps, use the non-emergency telephone number "305-4-POLICE (305-476-5423)", never 9-1-1.
- ▶ Never tell a Police Complaint Officer that a situation is more serious than it really is. It is against the law to intentionally and knowingly give false information to the police or emergency services. Abuse of 9-1-1 may delay someone else's access to emergency assistance.

Interesting Facts

The Miami-Dade County 9-1-1 Center handles more than 2 million telephone calls for police, fire rescue services annually. The number of radio transmissions by police, fire rescue exceeds 30 million. The Communications Bureau currently assigns, via radio, more than 675,000 calls for police service annually. The response time for a call requiring police, fire or rescue emergency assistance is generally less than five minutes.

A portion of the funding for 9-1-1 services is paid via telephone bills. Each conventional (land line) telephone subscriber and each wireless telephone customer pays a small amount each month for 9-1-1 fees.

More information regarding the Miami-Dade Police Department or the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department can be found at their respective web page sites:

Police—www.mdpd.com

Fire Rescue—[www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/fire rescue/](http://www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/fire%20rescue/)

For more information on the Communications Bureau and 9-1-1, click on the following locations on the left side of the Miami-Dade Police Department's web page:

1. 9-1-1 Emergency Guide
2. MDPD non-emergency telephone guide
3. Non-emergency telephone numbers for Miami-Dade Municipalities
4. MDPD A to Z Directory; "C", "Communications Bureau".

While you are visiting the Miami-Dade Police Department Web page, please acquaint yourself with our other services to the community.

9-1-1 Questions & Answers

Q. How do I know if I have a real emergency?

An emergency is when immediate police, fire or medical assistance is necessary to protect life or property.

If an emergency situation arises—a crime, a fire, a serious injury or illness—ask yourself whether police, fire or medical assistance is needed right now to protect life or property. If YES, then immediately dial 9-1-1 and advise the Police Complaint Officer of what has happened or is happening.

Call 9-1-1 whenever you believe there is an emergency. If you are not sure it's a real emergency, dial 9-1-1 and the Police Complaint Officer will make the final determination.

The 9-1-1 system receives numerous calls at the same time. The most serious calls will be handled first.

Q. What if I'm away from home at a pay phone with no change?

No money is needed for calling 9-1-1 from a pay phone. If there is an emergency, you can just pick up a pay phone, wait for a dial tone, and dial 9-1-1 without depositing a coin.

Q. What should I tell the Police Complaint Officer when I call?

- ▶ Stay calm. Give your name, location, and nature of the emergency.
- ▶ Listen carefully.
- ▶ Answer all questions as accurately as possible. Speak clearly and slowly.
- ▶ Do exactly as instructed during the course of the call.

Q. Should I hang up after I give the information and try to help or stay on the line?

Never hang up until you are told to do so. If you hang up and redial, your call will go to the end of the line of people waiting for service.

It may be frustrating for you, but we will need you to stay on the line until we advise you it's all right to hang up. Be patient if we seem to ask a lot of questions. There are certain things we must know to provide you with the services you need.

Q. What if I do not want to give my name? Will the operator still take the information?

The Police Complaint Officers are trained to ask for certain information including names, addresses and telephone numbers. If you are asked for your name and you do not wish to give it, you do not have to. We will then ask for the emergency or non-emergency information you are reporting.



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9-1-1 COMMUNICATIONS CENTER
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Miami-Dade
Police Department
COMMUNICATIONS

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